



California State Board of Education Policy

POLICY #
01-09
DATE
December 2001

SUBJECT

Golden State Examinations and California Standards Tests: Implementation of Senate Bill 233 (Chapter 722, Statutes of 2001)

REFERENCES

Education Code Section 60600 et seq.

HISTORICAL NOTES

None.

Background

Senate Bill 233 (Chapter 722, Statutes of 2001) sets forth significant goals for the improvement of California's assessment program to minimize the time required by current testing programs and to maximize the program's ability to serve students. This bill won unanimous support in the Legislature and also received broad support from the K-12 and academic community.

Given the widespread interest in the implementation of SB 233, and because SB 233 now requires that all contracts related to development, purchase, or administration of Golden State Exams (GSEs) are subject to approval by the State Board of Education, this written policy will enable the State Board's policy and priorities to be widely conveyed.

The fundamental concerns guiding this policy are to reduce redundancies in the state's testing program to maximize instructional time and to create a "policy of no surprises" for college-bound high school students that ensures that their performance in high school adequately prepares them for college.

Policies for Implementing SB 233

- 1) ***To affirm the commitment to state adopted academic content standards and to reaffirm the California Standards Tests (CSTs) as the official measure of progress toward meeting the standards.*** The CSTs will continue to be the flagship of the state's testing program. The CSTs will continue to serve the purposes for K-12 of providing information about student progress toward meeting state academic content standards. Changes to the blueprint for this exam will be made only when it strengthens the test's ability to serve these purposes.
- 2) ***To reduce redundancies across testing programs and to reduce testing time and the testing burden at the high school level.*** As called for in SB 233, where Golden State Exams assess the same subject matter content as the CSTs, the CSTs will continue as the main test for purposes of standards assessment. An augmented assessment of additional GSE items will be created as needed for the purposes called for in SB 233. State Board approval of the new GSE augmentation test format will be based on review of the blueprint for the new exams. In addition to designating high achievement, the purpose of the GSE augmentation is to reduce testing time and (where feasible) to use these GSE

California State Board of Education

721 Capitol Mall, Room 558
Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 657-5478
(916) 653-7016 (fax)



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augmented tests for postsecondary placement, credit, or admission. The targeted testing time for the new augmentations should be approximately one hour or one high school class period.

- 3) ***To work collaboratively with the Postsecondary Community.*** SB 233 calls for the involvement of the postsecondary education community in developing the augmentation of the CST/GSE. The purpose of this consultation is for the postsecondary education community to identify the content and degree of psychometric rigor that is needed to add to the content on the CST to inform postsecondary placement, college credit or admission decisions. While the State Board appreciates comments and suggestions from the postsecondary community regarding the format, content, and item design of the current K-12 standards and testing program, it would be most helpful to State Board decision-making if such comments or suggestions are expressed separately from the purposes of SB 233 with respect to the GSE augmentation.
- 4) ***To ensure cooperation between the K-12 and Postsecondary Community.*** The Superintendent of Public Instruction has asked the Intersegmental Coordinating Council (ICC) to officially represent the interests of the postsecondary community in carrying out the purposes of this law. The SBE will recognize that body for this purpose unless leaders of the various postsecondary communities otherwise advise us. This process must include representatives of the K-12 community, especially K-12 educators who serve on the Content Review Panels. Thus, the State Board will work cooperatively with the California Department of Education to include K-12 representatives in this process. Additionally, because the State Board will receive policy advice from this body, the State Board will select liaisons to consult with the ICC on behalf of the State Board.
- 5) ***To ensure that all California testing programs meet the strictest standards for psychometric rigor.*** Current GSEs were not designed for the purposes of high-stakes testing, such as informing placement and admissions decisions. The use of these tests to fulfill the new purposes set forth in SB 233 require study to determine the extent to which GSE items can serve those purposes. Each purpose requires a different level of rigor. For example, if the use of the test is to inform the placement of students, that requires one level of psychometric rigor. If the use of the test is for admissions, an entirely different and higher level of psychometric rigor must be met.
- 6) ***To facilitate other State Board goals of releasing forms of the CST to the public and (in general) to increase item rotation as needed to ensure breadth of standards coverage and improved test security for the CST.*** As the CST/GSE augmentations are developed, some items from the GSE will be removed from the current forms of the GSE exams. This does not mean that these items cannot serve the state's testing program in some other capacity. Those items might be useful for the purposes of the CST if they meet state standards, match the CST blueprint, and meet the CST's psychometric standards.



Priorities for Implementing SB 233

Creating the CST/GSE Augmentations

- First priority in creating the CST/GSE augmentations is in English-language arts (ELA) using the 11th grade test for ELA and mathematics using the summative high school math test for the additional purpose of making postsecondary placement decisions with the initial focus on use by the California State University system. The first two CST/GSE augmentations should be completed in time for the 2003 test administration with the other augmentations being phased in over time as part of the state's overall testing program.
- While priority one is being addressed, the remaining GSE tests will continue to be administered in their current form as needed to meet the current statute.
- The second priority, to commence no later than 2003, is to create the augmentations of the eight remaining subjects that overlap with the CST for the purposes of distinguishing meritorious performance and reducing testing time. The three GSE subject tests that have no overlap with the CST will therefore continue in their current form as long as they meet provisions of current statute.
- Third priority is to explore additional properties of these tests that are necessary to meet the purposes of postsecondary credit and or admissions as called for in statute.

Changes to the CST Blueprint

- First priority is to make any changes necessary to reflect the addition of foundational items.
- Second priority is to make any other necessary changes for the purposes of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program. These changes, if any, are to be changes made under the close supervision of the expert panel that has been jointly advising the State Board staff and California Department of Education staff.